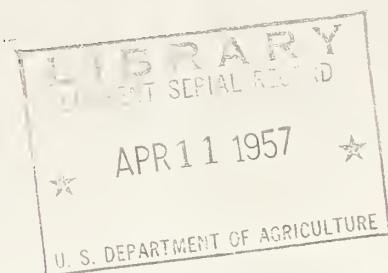


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FOOD PREVIEW



A summary of the food outlook especially designed to give maximum advance information to food editors to help them plan food features.

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service

March 22, 1957
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- MEAT: Total supplies for 1957 will be down some from 1956, but will remain relatively large -- second only to last year's all-time record.
- Beef: Supplies will likely be close to year-ago levels. Slaughter rates will continue to depend partly on factor so significant lately -- weather. Continued rainfall in drought areas of West and Southwest could reduce grass cattle marketings this summer and fall below those of year earlier. Marketings of fed cattle will total about as large as in 1956, but will be more evenly distributed throughout year.
- Pork: Supplies will continue smaller than last year. But margin by which they fall below year ago will gradually diminish this summer and fall. Number of sows for farrowing for the spring pig crop -- source of the fall's pork supplies -- is about same as year ago in principal Corn Belt States.
- Lamb: No marked change in supplies seems likely, with early lamb crop estimated 1 percent below last year.
- POULTRY:
- Eggs: Through spring, supplies will hold near those of year ago. Laying flock is about same size as a year ago, and production rates for next 2 months or so are likely to be about same as year ago. But large cuts so far this year in hatchings of chicks for laying-flock replacement indicate probability of larger cut in fall pullet flock than anticipated earlier. With these prospects, fall supplies are likely to drop below last year's levels.
- Chickens: Broiler production in 1956 rose to record, 24 percent over 1955. Production is continuing to increase. Recent "placements" -- barometer of future supplies -- have been 4 to 7 percent higher than year ago. And they may rise further the next few months.
- Turkeys: The 1956 crop was record large. Storage stocks rose to a record high, and were (at March 1) nearly double those of a year earlier. Rate at which poults are being hatched indicates the 1957 crop will rise even more above 1956 than the 10 percent gain farmers intended in January.
- DAIRY: Milk production this year may reach record 128 billion pounds, up close to 2 percent over 1956. Production of milk per cow topped 6,000 pounds per cow in 1956 for first time on record -- and apparently will climb still higher this year.
- CROPS: As spring planting season gets under way, cut in crop production from 1956 record seems likely. Acreage planted to crops in 1957 is likely to be smallest since World War I, reflecting increased participation in Soil Bank. Note: Acreages actually planted in 1957 may turn out larger or smaller than March 1 prospective plantings, as such things as weather, price changes, etc., lead farmers to alter their plans.
- RICE: Farmers plan to plant much less -- about 10 percent less than last year, and smallest acreage since 1941.

FRUIT:

- Citrus: Orange crop is estimated about 1 percent larger than last year, grapefruit 5 percent smaller, lemons 11 percent larger.
- Deciduous: Stocks of apples in cold storage March 1 moderately smaller than year ago, pears somewhat larger.
- Berries: Supplies of strawberries now marketing from early-spring States estimated 13 percent smaller than year ago, mid-spring acreage about same as last year, prospective acreage in late-spring States up 12 percent. Mid- and late-spring States produce most of strawberries marketed.
- Canned: Pack of single-strength orange juice running 6 percent larger, grapefruit juice down 6 percent, blended juice down 9 percent. Total citrus juice stocks, early in March, 15 percent over year ago.
- Frozen: Pack of orange concentrate in Florida running 7 percent ahead of year ago, expected to run heavy through spring. With larger carryover last fall, March 2 stocks considerably heavier than year ago. Cold-storage holdings of fruits March 1 (excluding juices) were 10 percent over year ago. Stocks of strawberries were 50 percent larger than last year.

VEGETABLES:

- Fresh: Production of winter crops for 1957 season estimated 13 percent below 1956. Biggest decreases (compared with last winter) for cabbage, lettuce, carrots. Significantly smaller output of celery, beets, shallots, spinach, lima beans. Larger supplies of winter sweet corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, cauliflower, artichokes, eggplant. Of early-spring crops for which production forecast has been made, lettuce and cauliflower increased significantly, with reduction indicated in onion production. Early-spring tomato acreage down one-fourth from last year. Early-spring asparagus about same as last year, with mid-spring and late-spring acreage continuing upward trend. Prospective acreage of late spring and summer onions considerably above acreage harvested in 1956. Growers plan late-spring and early summer watermelon acreage about 10 percent larger than last year.
- Processing: Canned and frozen vegetables in considerably larger supply than year ago. Winter and early spring crops of spinach are 10 percent larger than last year; producers plan to plant 3 percent fewer acres to peas.
- Potatoes: Supplies continue ample. Stocks of fall crop on March 1 were still one-fifth larger than same date last year. Heavy supplies of new-crop in prospect for next 2 months, with winter production up one-third over last year, spring plantings up one-fifth. According to farmers' March 1 intentions, potato plantings for year will total about one percent more than last year, but acreage for late summer and fall harvest (which supplies most of crop) will be 2 percent less than last year.
- Sweet-potatoes: Supplies remaining from 1956 crop much smaller than year ago. Farmers plan to cut plantings 3 percent from last year, to lowest level in years.
- DRY BEANS: Supplies slightly smaller than last year, but more than adequate for domestic and export demand. Farmers plan to plant slightly more than last year.

The Plentiful Foods Program

The U. S. Department of Agriculture, through its Plentiful Foods Program, will support industry campaigns on the following commodities, at the following times:

EGGS	March 1 to March 31
BEEF	May 9 to May 18
MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS	June 1 to June 30
MIDSUMMER TURKEY TIME	July 25 to August 4
